

# Underground Storage Tank Cleanup Program Update

## State Water Resources Control Board Division of Water Quality

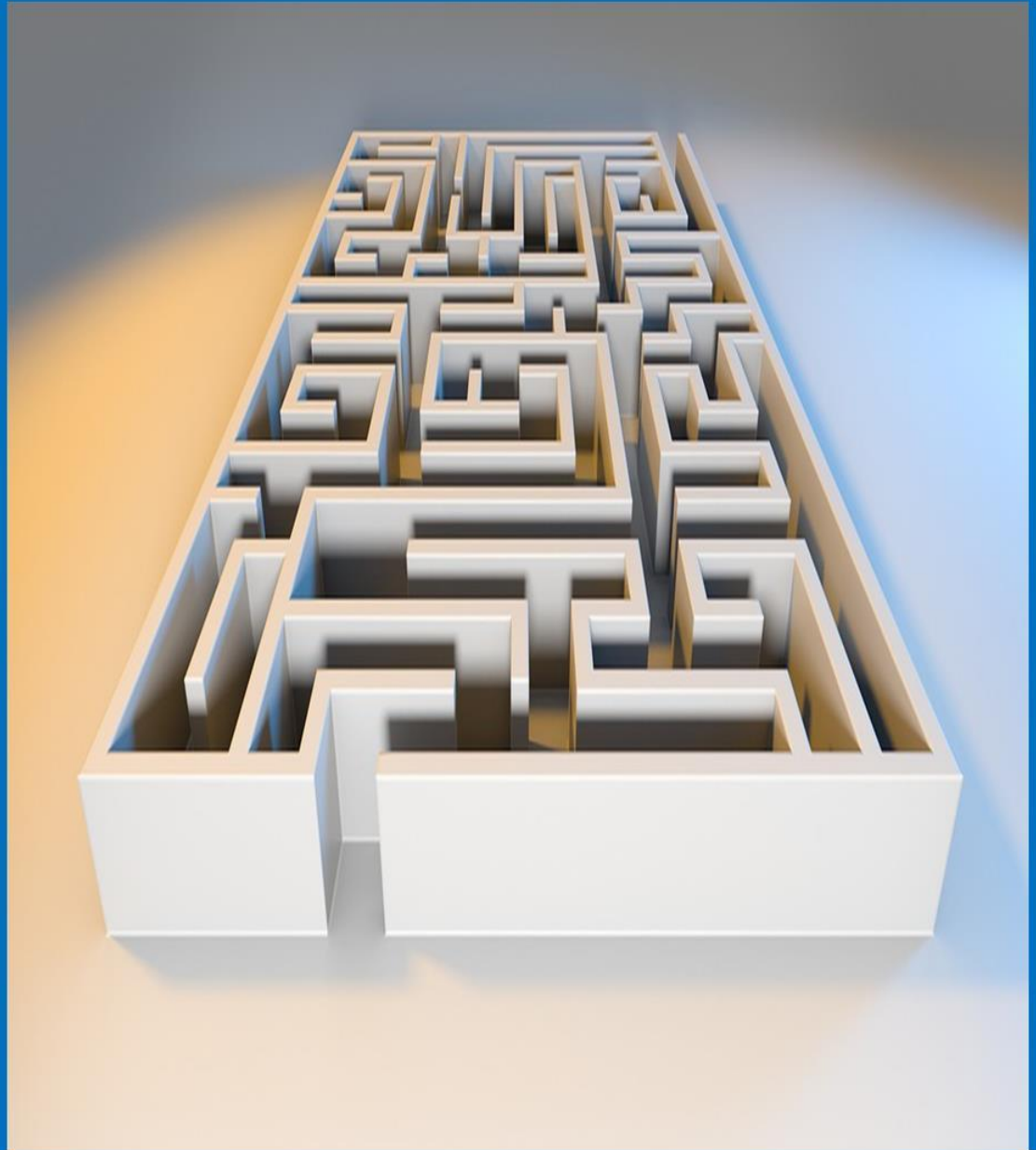
MATTHEW COHEN, PG, UNDERGROUND STORAGE  
TANK CLEANUP UNIT CHIEF



March 6, 2018 – Item 7

# Outline

- Program Overview and Successes
- Current Projects
- Future Challenges



# Program Overview

- Over 38,000 cases closed to date (92% of all cases)
  - Nearly 4,500 cases closed since the Policy was adopted (2012)
  - 536 cases during 2016/2017 Fiscal Year (FY)
- Approximately 3,100 remaining open cases
  - Lead
    - ~2,025 Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) cases
    - ~ 1,075 Local Oversight Program (LOP) cases
  - Funding
    - ~ 1,925 Active Cleanup Fund claim
    - ~ 1,175 No Cleanup Fund claim
- Number of new cases is decreasing (59 new cases opened during 2016/2017 fiscal year)



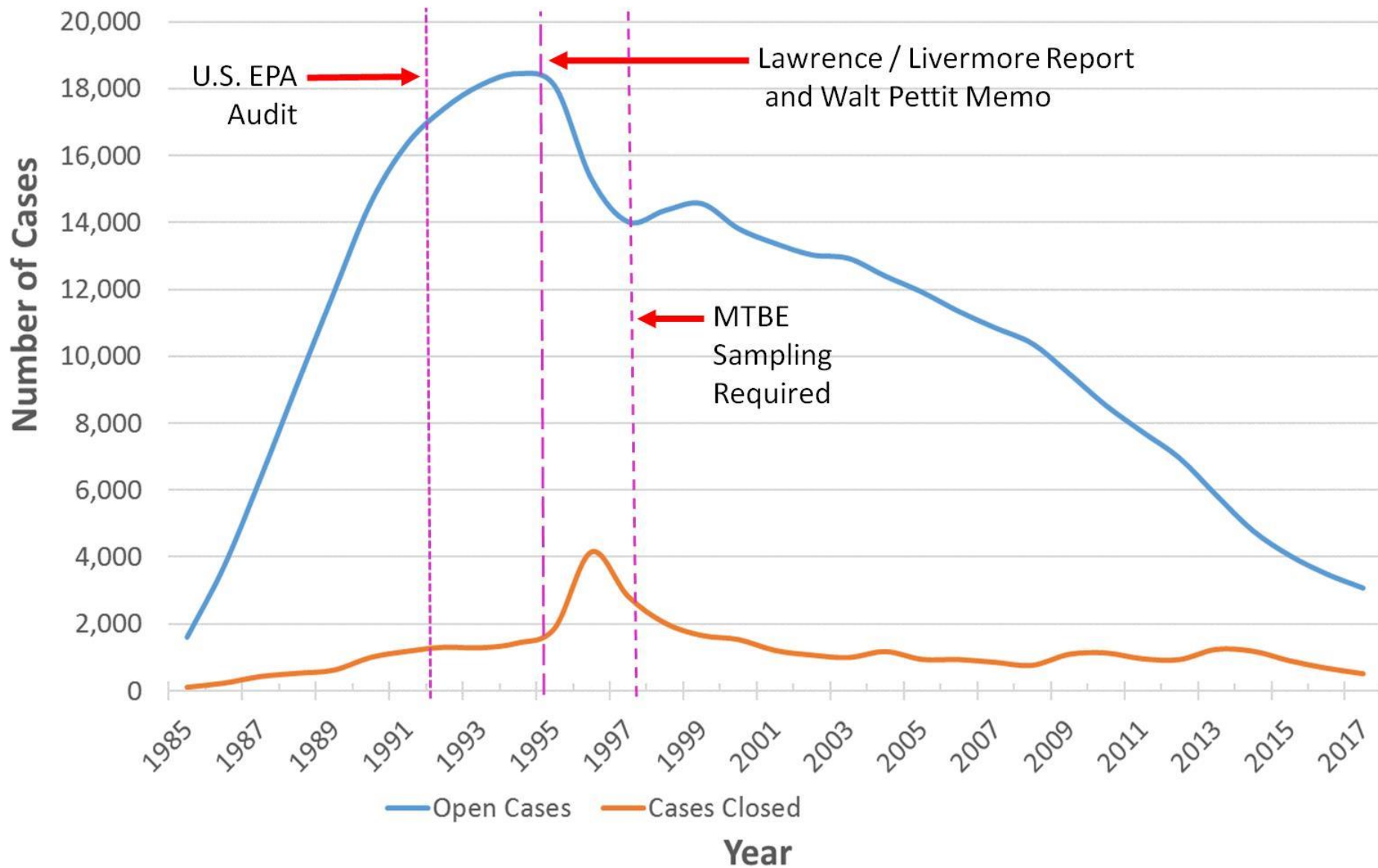


# Program Overview

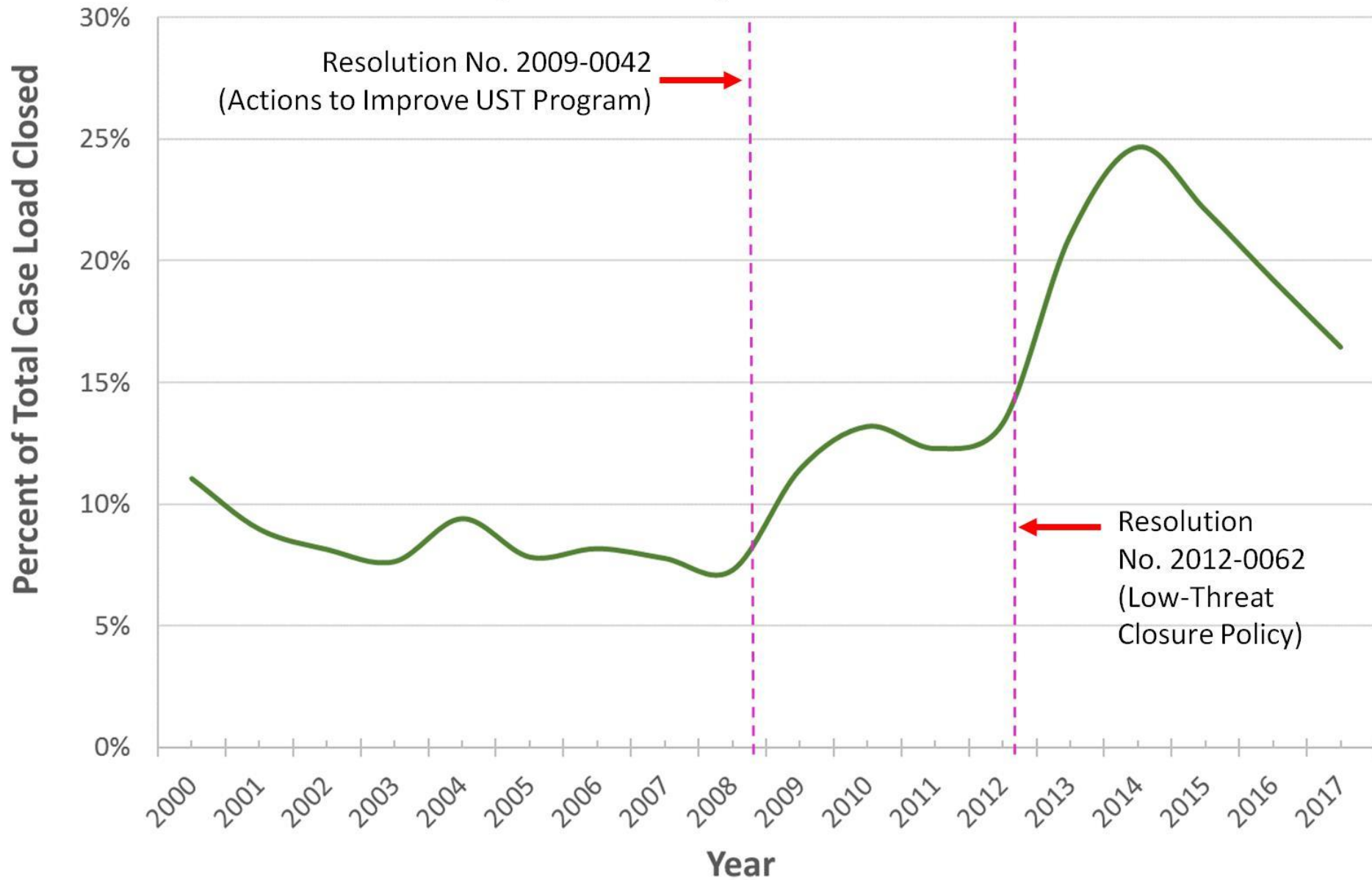
- Over 100 oversight agencies prior to LOP Certification (2013)
- Now 20 oversight agencies – State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board), 9 Regional Water Boards, and 11 LOPs
- ~ 90 staff overseeing underground storage tank (UST) cleanup sites across all agencies
- As expected, the average number of cases per staff is reducing



# UST Cleanup Program Caseload History (2000-2017)



# Closure Rate (2000 -2017)





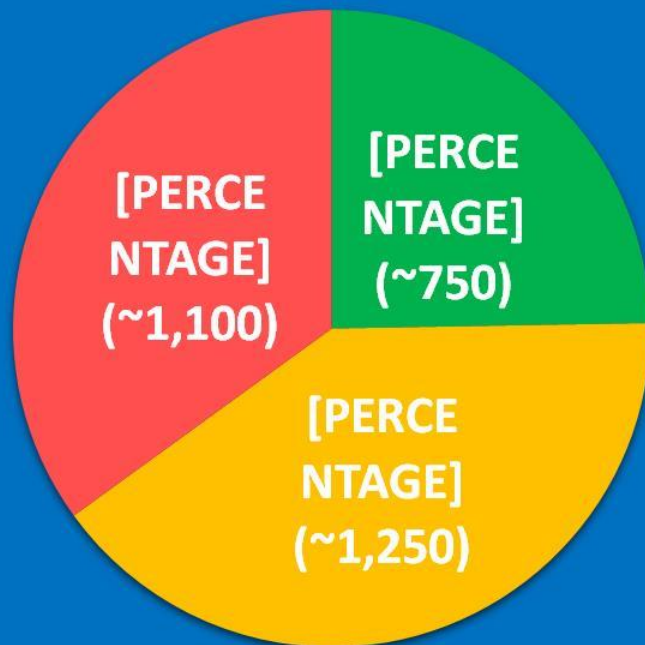
# Key Elements of Program Success

- Low-Threat Closure Policy provided consistent statewide closure standards
- LOP certification improved the uniform application of the program by local agencies
- GeoTracker database for case management and communicating with Responsible Parties/public
- Cleanup Fund resources to address cleanup and oversight costs



# Current Projects

## Expected Time for Closure of Remaining Cases

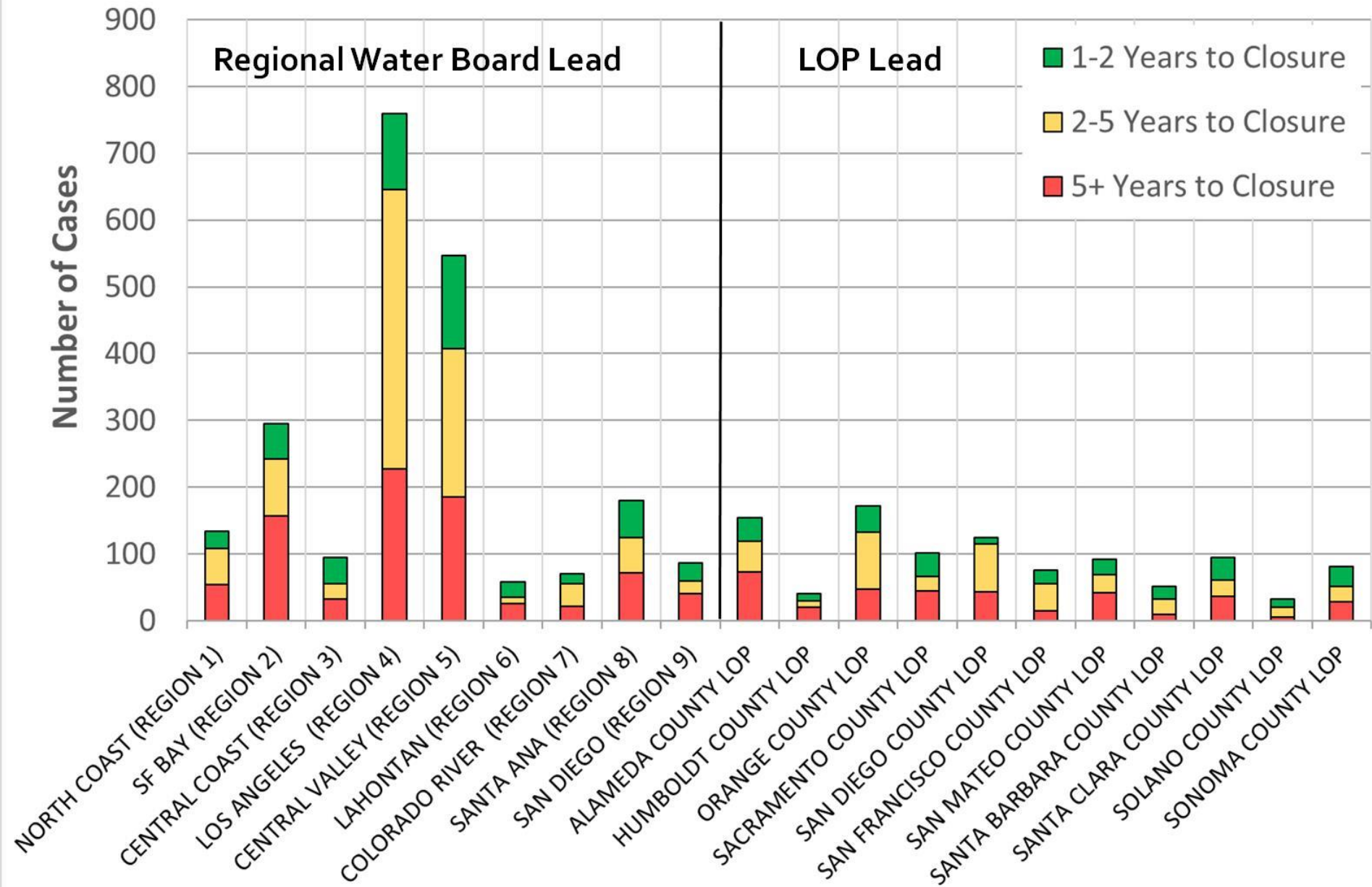


■ 1-2 years   ■ 2-5 years   ■ 5+ years

- The remaining “stalled” cases are more difficult and can be controversial
  - Unresponsive or unwilling responsible parties (RP)
  - Complex site conditions
  - Ineligible for Cleanup Fund
- Stalled cases require more staff resources
- Need to develop new tools and business processes to address the changing caseload



# Expected Time for Closure of Remaining Cases



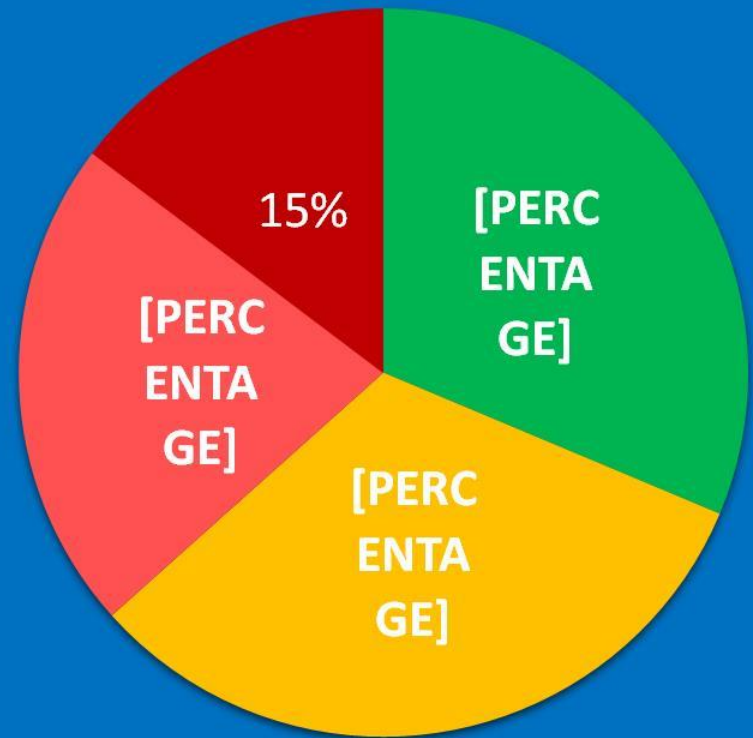
# Approaches to Stalled Cases

- Working with Regional Water Boards and LOP agencies to identify stalled cases
- Identifying and developing stalled case tools (templates and process improvements)
- Identifying funding alternatives when necessary
- Emphasize the importance of comprehensive Path to Closure plans for all open cases
- Continued training to improve consistent application of the program (Roundtable meetings)
- Facilitating conversations between responsible parties and caseworkers



# Path to Closure Plans (PTCPs)

- Resolution 2012-0062 Required PTCPs
  - GeoTracker has PTCP form
  - PTCPs are completed by the caseworkers
  - PTCPs guide RPs/Consultants
  - Communication is enhanced by PTCPs
  - PTCPs memorialize agreements
- State Water Board Staff analyzed existing PTCPs in GeoTracker
  - PTCPs should be regularly updated
- Quality PTCPs can help predict the future of the program



- Appears Thorough
- Closure Date Exceeded
- Lacks Sufficient Information
- No and/or Incomplete PTCP



# Federal Assistance with Stalled Cases

- Place-based contractor support was successful at the Los Angeles Regional Water Board (Region 4)
- Similar to Region 4, contractor support is now being applied statewide
- State Water Board, U.S. EPA, and contractor staff collaborate with the Regional Water Boards to develop individualized case strategies
- Contractors are providing assistance implementing case strategies



# Future Challenges

- Removal of Single-Walled Systems
  - Single wall tank replacement deadline is December 31, 2025
  - 3,166 single-walled features (tanks or piping) from 1,286 facilities
  - Expect 500-1,000 new release cases by 2025





# Future Challenges

- The Cleanup Fund is scheduled to sunset after December 31, 2025
  - After that date, funding for the UST Program (Regulatory and Cleanup) is uncertain
  - Regulatory programs should be preparing for transition
  - Tank owners and operators will have to find alternative financial assurance mechanisms
- LOP Agency Transitions
  - Remaining LOP agencies certified though June 2019
  - State Board to evaluate the LOP agencies for recertification
  - Assistance with transition of cases to Regional Water Boards





# Future Challenges (Long Range)

- Future of the UST Program with diminishing caseload
  - Regional Water Boards are likely to roll UST Programs into existing programs, like some already have done
  - Plan for the eventual transition of open cases and resources to the Site Cleanup Program
  - Apply the successes of the UST Program to the Site Cleanup Program



# More Information

- More on the status of the UST Program can be found on the State Water Board website: [https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water\\_issues/programs/ust](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/ust)
- Or on the latest U.S. EPA Annual Agency Status Report: [https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water\\_issues/programs/ust/publications/docs/agency\\_status\\_report\\_jul\\_2017.pdf](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/ust/publications/docs/agency_status_report_jul_2017.pdf)

